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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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SECURITY INFORMATION

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Bulgaria

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SUBJECT Prices in Sofia

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1. The following is a list of prices on various items as of October 1951:

Cinema ticket	50 to 300 leva
Theater ticket	150 to 650 leva
Soviet made watch	15,000 to 20,000 leva
Czech made watch	8,000 to 12,000 leva
Swiss made watch	40,000 leva
Man's haircut	50 leva
Woman's haircut	500 to 800 leva
Bar of soap (100 grams)	50 leva

2. The following articles were difficult to obtain:

Materials
Shoe leather
Rubber soles and rubber articles
Needles for sewing machines and knitting needles
Razor blades and razors
Barber's clippers
Scissors
Nails
Asbestos, copper, tin, zinc articles or sheets
Ball bearings
All medical supplies but particularly penicillin and streptomycin.

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3. Special shops in Sofia had articles for export, but were open only to foreign diplomats and government officials.

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4. Despite food shortages, no restaurants had been closed. The Sofia restaurants Bulgaria, Vitusa, Koop, and Union Palas had no rationing system, and almost any food could be obtained for a very high price. Cost of a meal in any of the above restaurants was approximately 800 leva. These restaurants were well run and their service was excellent. Some of the items on a menu were:

Chicken soup	80 leva
Roast chicken	250 leva
Pork chop	300 leva
Three egg omelette	150 leva
One liter of wine	250 leva

5. Other restaurants were divided into three categories: those at which a meal could be obtained for 200 leva, 170 leva, and 150 leva. These meals generally consisted of soup for about 20 leva, beans for about 40 leva, beans with 150 grams of meat for 60 leva, and bread for 20 leva. Meat could be obtained twice a week, and stewed fruit was served three times a week instead of soup.
6. Long queues of women and children were always seen outside provision stores and the normal wait was three to four hours.
7. There were no privately-owned shops, only small booths at which newspapers, cigarettes, postcards and candy could be obtained.

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